UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.9/1996/7
13 December 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT
Twenty-ninth session
26 February-1 March 1996
Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda*

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION IN 1995

Progress of work in the field of population in 1995: Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report reviews the progress achieved by the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat in implementing its programme of work in the field of population in 1995. It covers the activities of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis in subprogrammes dealing with the analysis of demographic variables at world level; world population projections; population policy and socio-economic development; monitoring, review and appraisal, coordination and dissemination of population information; and technical cooperation in population. Other continuing activities of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis are also described.

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CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION	1 - 6	4
I. ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AT WORLD LEVEL	7 - 17	5
A. Fertility and family planning	7 - 11	5
B. Mortality	12 - 13	6
C. International migration	14 - 16	7
D. Internal migration	17	7
II. WORLD POPULATION PROJECTIONS	18 - 22	8
A. World population estimates and projections: 1994 and 1996 Revisions	18 - 20	8
1. The 1994 Revision	18 - 19	8
2. The 1996 Revision	20	8
B. Urban, rural and city population estimates and projections: 1994 and 1996 Revisions	21 - 22	8
1. The 1994 Revision	21	8
2. The 1996 Revision	22	9
III. POPULATION POLICY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	23 - 31	9
A. Population policies	23 - 27	9
B. Population and development	28 - 31	10
IV. MONITORING, REVIEW AND APPRAISAL, COORDINATION AND DISSEMINATION OF POPULATION INFORMATION	32 - 38	11
A. Monitoring of population trends and policies	32 - 34	11
B. Coordination and dissemination of population information	35 - 38	11
1. Population Information Network	35 - 36	11
2. Publication and dissemination of research studies	37 - 38	12
V. TECHNICAL COOPERATION	39	12

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CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
Annex.	PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER MATERIAL ISSUED IN 1995 BY THE POPULATION DIVISION		14

INTRODUCTION

1. The Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat acts as the focal point for population, economic and social analysis and information, and provides substantive support to pertinent intergovernmental machinery, including the Commission on Population and Development and the Statistical Commission. Those functions include research and policy analysis and the execution of technical cooperation activities in the areas of population and statistics.

2. The Commission on Population and Development, at its twenty-eighth session, reviewed the progress of work for 1994 and the proposed programme of work for 1996-1997.

3. The present report deals with the research and technical cooperation work and information activities carried out by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat in the field of population during 1995. The activities are grouped according to the subprogrammes of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

4. The Population Division made every effort to implement the programme of work adopted by the Commission on Population and Development and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The work programme for 1994-1995 was formulated and implemented within the basic framework set forth in the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, taking into account the recommendations of the World Population Plan of Action 1/ (1974) and the International Conference on Population 2/ (1984). Part of the programme period was affected to some extent, however, by the additional responsibilities that had been placed on the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis to provide substantive support to the International Conference on Population and Development and its follow-up. To the extent possible, this was achieved by integrating the regular research activities of the Department with the added substantive reporting requirements of the Conference.

5. Some delays in the implementation of programmed outputs occurred as a consequence of the extraordinary measures taken by the Secretary-General in response to the financial situation of the Organization. Some activities were cancelled or had to be carried over into 1996.

6. The Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis continued to collaborate closely with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), whose financial assistance made it possible to expand the scope and character of the projects undertaken by the Department and to improve their substantive aspects. In addition, the Department maintained close and effective collaboration with UNFPA in connection with the substantive preparations for and servicing of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the follow-up activities to the Conference, and in carrying out technical assistance activities within the technical support services/country support team (TSS/CST) system.

I. ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AT WORLD LEVEL

A. Fertility and family planning

7. Women's education is widely acknowledged to be a crucial determinant of their reproductive behaviour. The relationship between education and reproductive behaviour of women has therefore been a critical element in fertility analysis at the United Nations. A recently published report, entitled Women's Education and Fertility Behaviour: Recent Evidence from the Demographic and Health Surveys, 3/ shows that in all regions, average fertility levels become lower with the transition from primary to secondary and to tertiary education. Higher educational attainment is associated with later entry into marriage and a later transition to motherhood and in turn is likely to influence family size: the study documents the fact that better-educated women consistently want smaller families. Education also affects women's ability and willingness to implement fertility preferences through contraceptive means. The study provides numerous arguments showing a strong association between women's education and health status, family well-being and reduced fertility, and these arguments are persuasive enough to warrant policy consideration.

8. Monitoring of contraceptive use world wide is an ongoing activity of the Population Division. A study, entitled Levels and Trends of Contraceptive Use as Assessed in 1994, has been completed and the report of the study has been submitted for publication. This is the third such global review of contraceptive practice carried out by the Population Division. The study provides data on contraceptive use, by type of method, for all countries with available information. It also presents regional and global average levels of contraceptive use and trends in levels of use, and estimates of the extent of availability of modern contraceptives in the developing countries. The study includes special features dealing with contraceptive use according to marital status and gender. It also employs an improved basis for estimating the number of married women and projecting the growth in the number of contraceptive users in the light of projected fertility declines.

9. Work continued during 1995 on a study of the family-building process. The study aims to measure the impact of family planning programmes by examining the nature of parity-specific fertility behaviour. Parity progression schedules are being analysed in order to measure changes in fertility. The study covers 15 developing countries with data from both the World Fertility Survey (WFS) and the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). The report is expected to be completed in early 1996.

10. Work also proceeded during 1995 on the study entitled Evolving Patterns of Fertility Behaviour in Developing Countries, which examines evolving patterns and trends in fertility in the light of the new fertility data made available from a large number of surveys undertaken in developing countries in recent years. Two computerized databases for monitoring and analysis of family planning and fertility data have been updated with the latest available information from national and other sources. First results suggest that although fertility has remained relatively high in sub-Saharan Africa in a number of countries, a fertility transition has commenced. Fertility has

continued to decline in Northern Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

11. An ad hoc expert group meeting was scheduled in October 1995 to review systematically the issues involved in the measurement of quality of family planning services. Owing to the financial crisis in the United Nations, the meeting was cancelled. However, a report on the topic is under preparation based on papers submitted by potential participants.

B. Mortality

12. A study on the status of women and child survival is nearing completion. A comprehensive set of data has been compiled allowing the estimation of infant, child and under-five mortality by sex for countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. A database showing the basic data and the estimates derived from them is being made available on diskette. The database for Africa, entitled Child Mortality by Sex: Africa, has already been released. Estimates of male and female mortality in childhood have been obtained for 87 countries - 36 in Africa, 28 in Asia and 23 in Latin America - derived from over 200 sources of data covering the spectrum from vital registration systems to sample surveys. The estimates obtained indicate that in most countries male children under age 1 experience higher mortality than their female counterparts but, among children ages 1-4, female mortality is higher than male mortality in many countries. DHS data show that in 9 out of 11 countries in Latin America, in 9 out of 21 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and in 7 out of 9 countries in Asia and Northern Africa, girls ages 1-5 are more likely to die than boys in the same age group.

13. The study also includes a set of papers exploring the mechanisms thought to lead to excess female mortality in childhood. A preliminary version of the set of papers is being released as a working paper prior to publication so as to make this important research readily available. Both the proximate determinants of sex differentials in child mortality, such as nutritional status and use of health services, and less proximate causes of such differentials are considered. An analysis of differences in nutritional status by sex of child indicates that in most countries the differences between boys and girls ages 3-35 months are small. However, the evidence suggests that the nutritional status of girls relative to that of boys deteriorates somewhat as children grow older. With respect to the use of preventive health measures, there are small differences in the immunization coverage of girls and boys in most countries. However, in Northern Africa, Southern Asia and Western Asia immunization coverage tends to be higher among boys. Furthermore, boys who are ill are also more likely than girls who are sick to be treated at modern facilities and to receive effective treatment. The report also considers the effects of maternal education, intra-household allocation of resources, and son preference on sex differentials in mortality. With regard to the last, data relative to Bangladesh, Egypt and the Republic of Korea show that in families that have mainly daughters, excess mortality among girls appears to be caused by short birth intervals rather than by deliberate neglect. The report provides a useful basis for the design of measures aimed at eliminating the pattern of excess and preventable mortality

among girl infants and children, as called for by the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. 4/

C. International migration

14. The estimates of the international migration stock in all countries of the world, available in 1994, have been updated as more information became available. As reported in 1994, the estimates had been derived largely from census information on the number of foreign-born persons enumerated in each country. Out of the 214 countries or areas constituting the world in 1990, 184 had at least one source of information on the international migrant stock for the period 1960-1990. Comparable estimates were derived for 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1990. They have been issued on diskette under the title Trends in Total Migrant Stock. At the world level, the estimates obtained indicate that the total number of international migrants rose from 75 million to 120 million between 1960 and 1990.

15. A database on migrant flows directed to selected developed countries (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America) has been released on diskette under the title South-to-North Migration. As far as possible, the data cover the period 1960-1994 and provide detailed information on migrants admitted annually by country of origin. The database allows for the estimation of South-to-North migration levels.

16. The updating of the data bank on levels and trends of international migration continued during 1995, as has the dissemination on diskette of information on the international migrant stock enumerated by censuses of developing countries. Work also proceeded on a study of levels and trends of international migration with particular emphasis on gender issues. The study will provide a comprehensive picture of the demographic characteristics of international migrants in major regions.

D. Internal migration

17. Considerable progress has been made in estimating the components of urban growth on the basis of intercensal methods. Estimates of intercensal rural-urban net migration are available for 39 developing countries for the 1960s; 45 developing countries for the 1970s; and 27 developing countries for the 1990s. However, only 13 countries have estimates for the three decades. Although it is not possible to generalize from such small numbers, the evidence suggests that the contribution of net rural-urban migration to urban growth has been declining. Thus, for 6 of the 13 countries with data for the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, the percentage of urban growth due to migration declined steadily over those decades. In five additional countries, the percentage of urban growth attributable to net migration increased during the 1960s and 1970s and declined thereafter. Eight of the 77 countries showing a decline during the past two decades are located in Latin America. A full set of rural-urban migration estimates and their relation to urban growth have been made available

on diskette under the title Rural-Urban Migration Estimates for Developing Countries.

II. WORLD POPULATION PROJECTIONS

A. World population estimates and projections: 1994 and 1996 Revisions

1. The 1994 Revision

18. Completion of the 1994 Revision of world population estimates and projections was announced to the Commission at its twenty-eighth session. At that time, all but one of the reports describing the results of the revision had been published. The final report, World Population Prospects: The 1994 Revisions, 5/ was issued in September 1995.

19. The report provides 900 pages of analytical and descriptive text, graphs and tables giving a full picture of world population trends to the present and alternative variant projections of how the population may evolve from 1995 to the year 2050.

2. The 1996 Revision

20. Work is currently proceeding on the 1996 Revision of the world population estimates and projections whose first results are expected to be announced during the summer of 1996. As in the previous revision, the 1996 Revision will present a century of demographic estimates and projections, incorporating an estimation period extending from 1950 to 1995 and four projection variants to the year 2050. For the 1996 Revision, full sets of demographic estimates and projections, by sex and age, will be presented, for the first time, for the Gaza Strip, Macau and Western Sahara. In addition, owing to the continued spread of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) in the world, the number of countries for which the demographic impact of AIDS is being incorporated will be increased to 28 (from the 16 in the 1994 Revision).

B. Urban, rural and city population estimates and projections: 1994 and 1996 Revisions

1. The 1994 Revision

21. Completion of the 1994 Revision of urban, rural and city population estimates and projections was announced at the time of the twenty-eighth session of the Commission. At that time, only the wall chart Urban Agglomeration, 1994 6/ had been issued. The remaining two reports, which were in press at the time of the twenty-eighth session of the Commission, have also been published. The wall chart Urban and Rural Areas, 1994, 7/ was issued in December 1994. The report World Urbanization Prospects: The 1994 Revision, 8/ containing 180 pages of analytical and descriptive text, graphs and tables that give a full picture of urban, rural and city population trends to 1995 and

alternative variant projections of how the population may evolve in the future, was issued in February 1995.

2. The 1996 Revision

22. Planning for the 1996 Revision of urban, rural and city population estimates and projections has begun. As discussed at the eighteenth session of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projections, there would be initial consultations with the regional commissions concerning data availability. The 1996 Revision will be enhanced by increasing the projection horizon to the year 2030; in past revisions, projections were to the year 2025.

III. POPULATION POLICY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A. Population policies

23. In 1995, the project entitled "International migration policies and programmes: a world survey" was continued. A wall chart, entitled International Migration Policies, 1995, 9/ has been published. It provides information on, inter alia, immigration policies concerning permanent settlement, admission of migrant workers and dependants of migrant workers, as well as on emigration policies.

24. During 1995, research concerning policy issues resulting from rapid population growth in the world's largest cities continued. The Challenge of Urbanization: The World's Large Cities, 10/ presenting profiles of 100 of the world's largest agglomerations, has been published. It is expected to be an important input for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) to be held in June 1996.

25. In 1995, work continued on the publication entitled World Population Policies, which consists of country-level profiles on new and emerging issues in the area of population policy. The first volume in the projected four-volume series, (covering countries, in alphabetical order, beginning with Afghanistan and continuing through the Dominican Republic) has been completed and is currently being edited.

26. The volume Abortion Policies: A Global Review, volume III, Oman to Zimbabwe 11/ was published in 1995. A wall chart on abortion policies, entitled World Abortion Policies, 1994, 12/ which had been published in English in 1994, was also published in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish in 1995. This is the first wall chart produced by the Population Division that has been issued in the six official languages of the United Nations.

27. The population data bank maintained by the Population Division has been continuously updated. In 1995, the fifth edition of Global Population Policy Database, 1995 (GRIPP:1995) and the companion volume, Population Policy Diskette Documentation, 1995, were completed and submitted for publication.

B. Population and development

28. A literature survey and research bibliography on the relationships between population and environment in developing countries, which was issued as a working paper in 1994 (ESA/P/W.123), has been made available in electronic form on the Internet.

29. A study of Government views on the relationships between population and the environment has been issued as a working paper pending its publication. The report is based on a review of official governmental statements, national reports and the draft and final documents adopted at major intergovernmental conferences dealing with population, environment and development issues from the early 1970s through the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, as well as of the international development strategies for the United Nations development decades since 1960. Over this period, the concept of development has evolved so as to give more attention to social aspects, poverty as a core concern and the sustainability of development. The report shows that, over the same period, population and environmental questions came to be viewed as inextricably linked, rather than as issues that could be dealt with separately. The review found that by the time of the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, the Governments of at least 79 countries had expressed concern with population-and-environment imbalances. Countries expressing such concerns included a substantial majority of the population of developing countries, where rapid population growth and unbalanced population distribution were cited by many Governments in connection with urban congestion and pollution, soil degradation, deforestation and threats to biodiversity.

30. An updated version of the database on population, resources, the environment and development (PRED Bank) has been issued. It incorporates information from the 1994 Revision of population estimates and projections, includes updates of other data series and incorporates a number of additional indicators. The technical notes and user's guide to the data bank and software have also been expanded. As in the original version of the PRED Bank, the new version includes a special version of the POPMAP software developed by the Statistics Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat. POPMAP is an information system for microcomputers that combines database, spreadsheet and geographical mapping facilities. Work was initiated in 1995 on a study of trends in population and land use in developing countries, drawing on information assembled in the PRED Bank.

31. Also ongoing during 1995 was a study of demographic aspects of poverty. The focus is methodological, with the long-term aim of increasing the amount of attention given to demographic factors in poverty research, and vice versa. The study includes an overview of approaches to measuring poverty and a discussion of data requirements for linking poverty measurement to the study of demographic factors. The study also considers ways in which measurement choices may affect the demographic profile of households classified as poor.

IV. MONITORING, REVIEW AND APPRAISAL, COORDINATION AND DISSEMINATION OF POPULATION INFORMATION

A. Monitoring of population trends and policies

32. At its twenty-ninth session, the Commission on Population and Development will have before it a concise report on world population monitoring, focusing on the topic of "Reproductive rights and reproductive health, including population information, education and communication" (E/CN.9/1996/2). This is the first annual report on a special theme derived from the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, as proposed by the Commission at its twenty-eighth session. 13/ The theme corresponds to the issues addressed in chapter VII of the Programme of Action, together with relevant parts of chapters IV, V, VIII, XI and XII.

33. The preparation of an expanded version of the report has also been completed and the draft will be available to the Commission as a working paper. In addition to an overview and an introductory chapter, the report consists of eight other chapters covering topics such as entry into reproductive life; reproductive behaviour; contraception; abortion; maternal mortality and morbidity; sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; reproductive rights; and population information, education and communication with respect to reproductive rights and reproductive health. The report centres on issues covered in chapter VII (Reproductive rights and reproductive health) of the Programme of Action but, as pointed out by the Commission on Population and Development, other chapters of the Programme of Action are also relevant to this issue. Those other chapters are chapter IV, (Gender equality, equity and empowerment of women); chapter V, (The family, its roles, rights, composition and structure); chapter VIII, (Health, morbidity and mortality); chapter XI (Population, development and education); and chapter XII, (Technology, research and development).

34. The report contains an extensive set of annex tables providing indicators of the current demographic situation in major areas and regions, as well as data on population size and growth, population distribution, and fertility and mortality levels in countries, major areas and regions. These annex tables also provide data specific to reproductive rights and reproductive health.

B. Coordination and dissemination of population information

1. Population Information Network

35. During 1995, the global Population Information Network (POPIN) Coordinating Unit, in collaboration with the regional commissions, has continued to focus on strengthening the Network and its ability to collect and disseminate information among United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations in the field of population. The Network continues to promote the use of electronic mail and the Internet to facilitate and enhance communication among the regional networks, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and the broader population community. Using the Internet, POPIN has greatly increased world-wide dissemination of population information produced by the United Nations and its

organizations. Enhanced access to these materials has been provided through the POPIN Gopher and the POPIN World Wide Web site (URL = http://www.undp.org/popin/popin.htm), which has been established to facilitate the use of electronic media for publication of population information and to improve coordination of dissemination efforts world wide.

36. From 12 to 21 June 1995, POPIN held meetings of its Advisory Committee and Information Technology Working Group in Bangkok. The meetings were convened by the Population Division and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The purpose of the meetings was to review the status of POPIN activities and electronic computer networking in each of the regions, present the POPIN work programme and future plans, and draft a strategy for POPIN activities for the next biennium (1996-1997). Represented at those meetings were the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), ESCAP, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Northern American POPIN; the UNFPA country support team in Bangkok; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) regional office in Bangkok; and the World Health Organization (WHO) regional office in New Delhi.

2. Publication and dissemination of research studies

37. The Population Division continues to publish the results of its research studies in a variety of formats to meet the needs of different audiences. They are widely disseminated to Governments, to national and international organizations, to research and educational institutions, to individuals engaged in social and economic planning, research and training, and to the general public. It also continues to develop and maintain databases and software, which are made available on magnetic tape and/or diskette(s). A list of the Population Division's publications and other material issued in 1995 is given in the annex to the present report.

38. The Population Division continues to receive and respond to numerous requests for population information from United Nations organizations, research institutions and individual scholars. It also provides background information to and participates regularly in international conferences and meetings of inter-agency groups and professional societies. Information from the Population Division has appeared prominently in a number of publications and reports of other United Nations bodies and international conferences and meetings.

V. TECHNICAL COOPERATION

39. During 1995, the Population Division continued to provide technical assistance services to more than 80 projects in 45 developing countries in Africa, Asia, Western Asia, Latin America and countries with economies in transition in the areas of population and development training, institutionalizing analysis and research on socio-economic and demographic data obtained from population censuses, surveys and vital registration systems, population policy, and population and development. During 1995, TSS specialists

in the areas of demographic analysis, population and development, population policy, fertility and family planning, and teaching and training in demography augmented, whenever possible and as required by other staff of the Population Division, substantive support provided to the eight country support teams (CSTs). In addition, TSS specialists contributed to an expert group meeting organized by the Statistics Division on data collection and analysis in May 1995 and to a Senior Policy Seminar on HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, organized by ECA. Furthermore, a number of missions were undertaken by TSS specialists to CSTs in Dakar, Addis Ababa, Harare, Santiago and Suva. The Interregional Adviser on Population and TSS staff participated in Tripartite Project Review (TPR) meetings in Africa, Asia and Europe to back-stop projects executed by the Population Division.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations World Population Conference, 1974, Bucharest, 19-30 August 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), chap. I.

2/ See Report of the International Conference on Population, 1984, Mexico City, 6-14 August 1984 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.XIII.8 and corrigenda).

3/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.23.

4/ Report of the International Conference on Population and Development Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1.

5/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.16.

6/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.4.

7/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.6.

8/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.12.

9/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.XIII.7.

10/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.XIII.4.

11/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.24.

12/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XIII.8.

13/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 7 (E/1995/27), annex I, sect. III.

Annex

PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER MATERIAL ISSUED IN 1995 BY THE POPULATION DIVISION

Research studies

World Population Prospects: The 1994 Revision. ST/ESA/SER.A/145. Sales No. E.95.XIII.16.

World Urbanization Prospects: The 1994 Revision. ST/ESA/SER.A/150. Sales No. E.95.XIII.12.

Concise Report on the World Population Situation in 1995. ST/ESA/SER.A/153. Sales No. E.95.XIII.14.

Results of the Seventh United Nations Population Inquiry among Governments. ST/ESA/SER.R/140. Sales No. E.95.XIII.11.

The Challenge of Urbanization: The World's Large Cities. ST/ESA/SER.A/151. Sales No. E.96.XIII.4.

Women's Education and Fertility Behaviour: Recent Evidence from the Demographic and Health Surveys. ST/ESA/SER.R/137. Sales No. E.95.XIII.23.

Population Consensus at Cairo, Mexico City and Bucharest: An Analytical Comparison. ST/ESA/SER.R/142. Sales No. E.96.XIII.2.

Developments in Demographic Training and Research Projects: Aspects of Technical Cooperation. ST/ESA/SER.R/143. Sales No. E.95.XIII.13.

Proceedings of expert group meeting

International Migration Policies and the Status of Female Migrants: Proceedings of the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration Policies and the Status of Female Migration, San Miniato, Italy, 28-31 March 1990. ST/ESA/SER.R/126. Sales No. E.95.XIII.10.

Wall charts

Urban and Rural Areas, 1994. Sales No. E.95.XIII.6.

World Abortion Policies, 1994. Sales No. E.94.XIII.8. In Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish (English version issued in 1994).

International Migration Policies, 1995. Sales No. E.96.XIII.7.

Periodical

Population Newsletter

Issued biannually to provide, to a wide readership, information on the programme activities of the Population Division; on action taken by legislative bodies with competence in the population field; and on meetings on population and related issues organized by the Population Division and other United Nations organizations; as well as on recent and forthcoming publications of the Population Division.